



Meet Our Ed Prep Design Fellows

Marie Ahern is the Director of Curriculum at Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School district and is an adjunct faculty member at Johnson & Wales University. Prior to her current role, Marie worked as a principal for many years, was one of the state's first instructional coaches, and taught English at the middle school level.



Leslie Anderson is the Director of Pupil Personnel Services at the Bristol Warren Regional Schools in Rhode Island. Leslie has held a variety of administrative and teaching positions in her 38 year career, is a member on the adjunct faculty at Johnson and Wales University, the Special Education Advisory Board at Rhode Island College, and plays an active role on both the Math and Literacy State Advisory Boards. She is the lead on many district initiatives including data based individualization, RTI and social emotional supports for students. In partnership with American Institute for Research, the National Center for Intensive Intervention and UCONN, Leslie been the driving force toward full implementation of data-based individualization both at the district and state level. Leslie was named the 2017 Rhode Island Special Education Director of the Year and along with her staff named CEC's DLD Division 2017, Outstanding Educator of the Year.



Jason Appel is a math teacher with 22 years of experience teaching in public schools in New York City and Rhode Island at the secondary level. He was a FuseRI Fellow (cohort 1) and a TeachPlus RI Fellow. He has presented on blended and personalized learning at ISTE, iNACOL, Tech and Learning Live, BPLC, and numerous other conferences around New England. He is obsessed with using playlists to allow students to learn at their own pace and in their own way.



Arthur Eduardo Baraf has been a principal at The Met High School in Providence, RI for ten years. He is also a Students-at-the-Center Distinguished Fellow, graduate instructor at Providence College's Masters in Urban Teaching program, and creator of the Student-Centered Learning Podcast. Arthur also coaches school leaders through his work with the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity.





Alexa Brunton has served as a middle school Social Studies and ESL educator at DelSesto Middle School in Providence, Rhode Island for the past four years. She serves on the Instructional Leadership Team and is the chair of the Family Engagement Committee. She was part of the 2016 inaugural team that implemented Summit Personalized Learning at DelSesto Middle School. Alexa is a Summit Learning Fellow and trains educators who are new to Summit Personalized Learning. Additionally, Alexa serves as the ESL content specialist for Teach for America Rhode Island. Alexa is passionate about the fight for educational equity, ESL instruction and personalized learning. Follow her on Twitter @Ms_Brunton



Melissa Denton is the Director of Pupil Personnel for Westerly Public Schools. In addition to this role, she is an adjunct professor in the MAT program for Johnson and Wales University. Special education is Melissa's passion, and she strives to share this passion through her work with ARIASE, RIDE's NTC induction work as a trainer, and as an Ed Prep Design Fellow. She has been working in the field for 28 years.



Theresa M. DeRiso has served as a teacher in the Lincoln Public schools for 23 years, 14 years as a high school ELA Department Chair and English teacher, and nine years in the middle school as the K-8 ELA Curriculum Coordinator, Literacy Coach in the four core areas, Virtual High School Site Coordinator and Instructor. For the past three years, she has served as the North Providence School Department PreK-12 Curriculum & Technology Integration Specialist, where she provides professional development to K-12 teachers to infuse blended and personalized learning tools into their curriculum and scope and sequence. She has been National Board Certified twice and plans to renew again in 2022, regardless of her position. #JoyfulLearning #LoveTwitter #EmpowerKids #Yogini Follow her on Twitter @tderiso10



Paula Dillon is the Assistant Superintendent for Barrington Public Schools, Rhode Island. Her experience includes curriculum development, instructional design, assessment design, training facilitation, teaching, and special education. Prior to this position, Paula taught high school social studies and special education for William M. Davies Career and Technical High School and East Greenwich High School for sixteen years, where she also served as the Director of Special Education and Assistant Superintendent for East Greenwich Public Schools in RI. Paula volunteers her time to serve as a visiting chair for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and teaches Curriculum for the Doctoral Program at Northeastern University.





Bernard DiLullo, Jr. is Superintendent of Johnston Public Schools and has served in that role for eight years. Prior to becoming Superintendent, Bernie worked in Johnston first as an Assistant Principal at the Ferri Middle School and then as Principal of the Sarah Dyer Barnes Elementary School. He has spent 35 years in education, beginning in a special education residential school in Swansea, Massachusetts for 22 years. Bernie's doctoral work focused on effective school leadership and he continues to see the need to develop well-rounded instructional leaders.



Jessica Geremia is an Academic Technology Fellow employed by Chariho Regional School District. She left the classroom to support professional development and strategic planning for blended and personalized learning. Jessica served as a Fuse RI Fellow where she partnered with district leaders to spread blended learning strategies throughout the state. She is an advocate for creating supports for teachers as they work to meet the needs of today's learners. Twitter: @Jessgere



Tim Heavey is the Director of Human Capital for Blackstone Valley (BVP) Prep Mayoral Academy. In his role, he serves as the principal adviser to school and network leaders on recruitment, selection, induction, educator evaluation, educator certification, and conflict resolution. Prior to joining BVP, Tim worked at RIDE as an Educator Quality Specialist where he helped to lead the design and implementation of new, rigorous, educator evaluation systems for teachers, support professionals, and building administrators. Tim also worked for TNTF, where he helped to launch the Rhode Island Teaching Fellows, the first alternate-route teacher preparation and certification program in the state. He began his career as a teacher in grades 1, 2, and 5.



Cassie Iacona is a Reading Specialist for grades 9-12 in North Providence, RI. She began her teaching career as an English teacher, and has a passion for literature and its potential to empower its readers. In both the classroom and her personal life, this dog-loving, self-proclaimed "geek" finds herself living and learning in the sweet spot between digital and old-fashioned practices of mindfulness.





Deb Ramm is a National Board Certified Teacher, formerly teaching fourth grade for 20 years and now in a new role in her district as Instructional Technology Coordinator. Deb was a 2015 PBS Lead Digital Innovator and 2018 PBS Digital All-Star, her district's Teacher of the Year in 2016, a FuseRI Fellow since 2014, an awardee for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching in 2014 and president of the Rhode Island Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. She helps to build technology competencies of students and teachers across her district, provides technology-based professional learning opportunities for educators across the state, and develops strategies for personalization through blended learning.



Maureen Rooney is a passionate educator with over 20 years of experience teaching in multiple schools and with a variety of ages and subjects. Currently, she is teaching 5th grade ESL in Providence. Maureen has participated in various fellowships and institutes, both locally and internationally, including RI Learning Champions and Down City Design, as well as a Global Scholar through Rotary Exchange and Earthwatch Fellow. Maureen is dedicated to improving the outcomes for all students and diligently works to that end on a daily basis.



Liz Russillo works as a physical science, chemistry, and engineering design teacher at Smithfield High School. She is also the science department chair and the student council advisor. Liz is extremely passionate about student-centered learning and positive school culture. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband Steve and their two daughters.



Carrie Champlin-Sorenson is a first grade teacher at Highlander Charter School, where she has been teaching and learning for eight years. She moved from New York City to Rhode Island to pursue a Master of Arts in Teaching at Brown University, and has found a welcoming community of artists and innovators in education here in the ocean state. She believes in education as a platform for social change, and enjoys collaborating with students, colleagues and families to create rich and enduring educational experiences.



Marissa St. Louis is a National Board Certified Teacher who has been working with the Pawtucket School Department for 17 years. She has worked as both a special educator and general education classroom teacher. She has served as a member of the PREP-RI team and as a clinical educator with various local colleges. She also provides professional development within her district.





Alicia Storey is Assistant Superintendent in Westerly Public Schools. Ms. Storey has taught high school science in both an alternative and traditional setting. She served as an administrator at South Kingstown High School and as Principal of Johnston High School. She is an Annenberg Institute for School Reform Math/Science Fellow (1995/1996) and a co-recipient of an \$82,000 Senator Reed Aquaculture Education grant. She has also served as a Model Classroom Instructor for the RI Teacher Technology Initiative (RITTI), lead reviewer for the RI Commissioner of Education Diploma System, and currently serves as Co-Principal Investigator of the NSF funded RI Enhanced Science Education project (RITES).

